

Hobbies

Coin market shows positive change

By Roger Boye

Rare-coin prices registered a tiny gain in 1992, thanks in part to a pick up in trading at year's end.

The widely followed Coin World Trends Index indicates that the overall market went up 3.7 percent last year, its best performance in this decade. Hobby newspaper Coin World tracks nearly 17,000 coin values covering 13 condition categories.

"A brighter outlook on the economy after the election translated to better feelings, with people more willing to invest in coins," said Keith M. Zaner, who compiles the index. "There's been a continuation of that good feeling [in January]."

Zaner added that, in general, rare-date coins did better last year than the more common varieties. For example, certain types of uncirculated Indian-head cents and old U.S. gold coins

made in New Orleans jumped in value while many common-date silver dollars dropped.

The Coin World index advanced just 1.1 percent in 1991 after falling by about 3.6 percent in 1990, an anemic performance compared with the coin-market heyday of the late 1970s.



Collectors who think they've been swindled by fast-talking telemarketers may find that help is just a fax away.

A group of rare-coin dealers has promised to assist consumers who may have bought overpriced or misrepresented rare coins by telephone.

"Our hotline (818-832-9946) is aimed at the boiler-room operations that use high-pressure sales tactics," said Michael Olnick, executive assistant for the Professional Numismatists Guild, Inc. "Those people put a black mark on the entire industry."